

SiteWorks Newsletter November 2025

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This newsletter is distributed to SiteWorks Web Managers (WMs) who are registered with us. We can optionally hold a second contact (Assistant WMs).

Do pass this link on to your SiteWorks users and others who contribute content.

To update our records, please use the form launched by clicking the button on our homepage at <https://siteworks.u3a.org.uk>.

Survey findings

Earlier this year, all Web Managers and assistants, who were registered with SiteWorks, were asked to complete a short questionnaire to gain views on SiteWorks that was delivered in late 2024. The objectives being to understand how individual u3as approached the use of their websites, identify any challenges and provide u3as, TAT and TATTTL with feedback that can be applied to other similar projects.

We had over 400 responses to the online questionnaire. This document provides a summary of the results from the questionnaire contained in the report to TAT:

Context: Of the respondents, 84% were web managers, of whom a significant minority (~40%) had no previous website experience. The u3as considered in the report ranged in size from less than 50 to over 3000 members, with an average size of 430. It was noted that in many u3as, the main method of rapidly circulating information was via email (with or without attachments).

Migration: This optional section allowed those respondents who had been through the migration process to reflect on the process. Of those who responded over 80% commented that the process went smoothly, with excellent support from the migrators. Some u3a raised comments regarding the documentation's length. Some u3as commented that they have to write custom documents for internal use. It was noted that for those web managers who had no previous website experience, the learning curve was steep, but the use of *LocalWP* for

practice, coupled with the initial documents, was frequently mentioned as being highly beneficial and provided an excellent introduction.

SiteWorks Websites: It was clear that the majority of u3as, see the website as a recruiting tool, giving an online presence in the local community and providing information to current and future members. The provision of Group and Event pages are considered by the majority to be a significant part of the sites function. It was noted that 50% of sites are updated weekly, with 14% being done daily. One criticism was made was regarding the challenges regarding search engine optimisation.

Usability: Over 80% of respondents expressed confidence regarding the underlying technologies (WordPress), the provided security measures, including the backup policy, and general usability. While most of the editing function caused no problems, the development of query loops and page formatting for phones and tablets presented a challenge to many content creators. The respondents noted that some additional features would be particularly helpful, in particular a form building and e-commerce capability. Most respondents were familiar with the support available, including the help desk and user guides, though the development forum was not widely used.

Plugins: Twenty percent of the respondents had installed additional plugins, particular to provided capability to transfer the website to *LocalWP* for training, and to overcome the limitation of the WordPress Media Library and the lack of a form builder.

Conclusions: The following were identified by the respondents as the key strengths of the project:

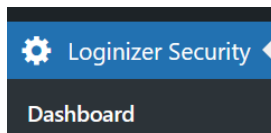
- **High Degree of Satisfaction:** SiteWorks seen as a major improvement over SiteBuilder. The respondent commented on the ease of use, strong support, and smooth migration. The fact that the project was volunteer led was commented on.
- **Support & Training:** The help desk, migrators and Q&A sessions were highly valued. The training and documentation were considered to be very strong, especially given the volunteer contributions.
- **User Friendly:** The respondents appreciated the fact that the entire process was designed to help non-technical users and support smooth succession planning. Given that over 40% of the initial web managers were unfamiliar with WordPress initially, most users managed well after the training period.
- **Hosting & Maintenance:** The respondents appreciate not needing to manage hosting, backups, or other related technical activities.

A number of improvements were identified by the respondents:

- System Integration with Beacon to give better synchronisation (e.g. group leader information) to reduce data duplication.
- Enhanced tools required for event handling and payments are missing from the application.
- The WordPress Media library seen as messy and needs better indexing and easier maintenance. It should be noted that this is outside the scope of the SiteWorks project, though a number of plugin solutions have been noted.
- Training & Documentation. Some respondents thought that the initial documents were too long or dense. There appears to be a need for a quick-start or “idiot’s guide”, together with ongoing training (especially for editors) with simpler, targeted training paths.
- A requirement for easier web-based form generation tools was requested by a number of respondents.

Login protections

The **Loginizer** plugin temporarily blocks any login where the user fails to provide the correct username and password after 4 attempts. These failures are recorded, with a high-level summary available on the Loginizer Dashboard (Loginizer Security menu on the main dashboard).

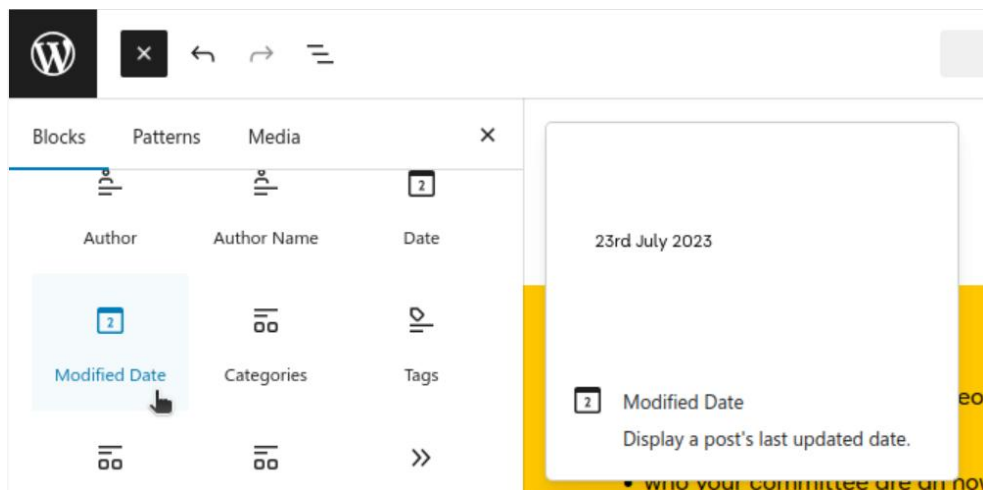


Imunify360 is a blanket protection on the whole of the SiteWorks hosting platform. It will include antivirus, firewall, intrusion detection. This is administered by the company Sarah Hayes, and the SiteWorks system admin team have no access to Imunify360. It is totally separate from Loginizer.

Display modified date

With the majority of SiteWorks sites having been in place for over a year visitors may find it helpful to know when a page was last updated (Saved).

There is a block to do this called **Modified Date**.



When the page is viewed it will display the date, for example:

26th July 2025

The settings for the block allow the date format to be customised and to only display the date if the page has been updated since it was first created.

Note that the block is best added when the content is actually updated because just adding the block and saving the page will of course display today's date.

SiteWork minor fixes release 1.2.3

Deployment started on 4th November. This release to SiteWorks Core resolves a number of minor issues:

- Group category with & will not display in Filtered Group List
- Notice block Title disappears when there are no notices
- Event list display breaks if an event uses an Excerpt containing HTML tags
- Filtered Group Display categories not presented alphabetically
- The Contact Form has additional checks to avoid multiple submissions following refreshing the browser (deployed 27th October)

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